Man's Best Business Asset Is Reputation

By John K. LeBaron.

A GOOD reputation is a man's best trade-mark.

Reputation is not what a man thinks of himself, but what others think of him.

A man's estimate of himself isn't apt to pass current.

Most men would put the value far too high.

Some few would put it too low.

Generally the estimate is in inverse ratio to the value.

An unprejudiced public may be trusted to strike a just level.

When it is announced that a new miracle-working electric device has been invented the world is skeptical.

If it is stated that Edison is the inventor, skepticism is changed to faith.

In the reputation of the Wizard of Menlo the public puts its trust.

George Bernard Shaw says he has written and can write better plays than Shakespeare's.

But Shaw's opinion and Shaw's reputation are a long ways apart.

The verdict is still in favor of the poet of Stratford.

N. P. Willis, who is scarcely remembered by a succeeding generation, considered himself the greatest American poet.

That was Willis's estimate.

Bryant, Longfellow and Holmes set themselves upon no pedestal, but their reputations were and are secure.

They rest upon the estimate of the public.

We can build, but we cannot dictate a reputation.

A prominent Western advertiser was once asked what he considered the most essential element in advertising. His reply was, "Reputation!" "A page advertisement," said he, "is of little value unless the man making the announcement has a reputation to back it up."

It isn't so much what a merchant offers as the fact that HE offers it.

Reputation multiplies the value of printer's ink.

When, after a lapse of fifteen years, it was announced that Verdi had written a new opera the musical world was on "the tiptoe of expectancy."

It was not the title of the opera, nor the Shakespearian theme, nor any star cast that aroused public interest.

It was Verdi.

"Rigoletto," "Trovatore," "Traviata" and "Aida" had established his reputation.

"Otello's" reception was cordial, as a natural consequence.

Washington's reputation was invulnerable.

When a President was wanted for the new republic there was no question as to the man.

The man in whom the public puts its trust is the man who points the way to great events.

Reputation is worth more than riches.

Wealth in the hands of one who is discredited becomes a curse.

"I have lost my reputation! and what remains is bestial," cries Cassio.

He who is without reputation is like a rudderless ship without a sail.

A tree of a century's growth can be felled in an hour.

So with reputation! Difficult to attain, priceless to possess, it must be jealously guarded.

Many of Kipling's recent contributions to literature have seriously warped the reputation based on earlier and better work.

Hard earned reputations have sold innumerable square feet of bedaubed canvas.

Such betrayals are always extravagantly expensive.

The public is hard to win, but easy to lose.

Deception is a double-edged dagger.

A reputation is too valuable an asset to be sacrificed to greed.

It is so valuable that it should be the aim of every man to attain.

Mrs. Brown Potter Says She Left Here Broken-Hearted and That She Comes Back a Stranger in Her Own Country

By Charles Darnton.

A BROODING silence that had settled over the fire-lit head of Mrs. Brown Potter was broken with the words:

"After twelve years I have come back to my own country a stranger. People have asked me why I chose to go to England. The answer is simple enough: I was given no choice in the matter. My own people did not want me. I was driven away—I was written off the American stage. They kicked me out."

A bitter smile in memory of the dead past buried itself in the colorless face. The smile might have been Mrs. Campbell's, the courage Bernhardt's.

"They hurt me," she added, simply. "I had come from the South, filled with enthusiasm and treasuring the ideals of my girlhood, impossible ideals, perhaps, yet I believed in them. These romantic ideals I attempted to express on the stage, nothing more. What was the result? They accused me of vanity, of affectation and other things of which I was not guilty. They trampled on me, stamped on me. They broke my heart. And so I picked up the poor little pieces and carried them to England. I had to earn my living. I had to go somewhere. They didn't want me here."

Mrs. Potter's slender hands took wings, and after fluttering within touch of her burning hair sank down again upon the arms of her chair in her dressing room at the Lincoln Square Theatre, where she is giving vaudeville its first poetic "turn."

Preserving the Language.

"The first thing I had to learn in England was English," she said. "I was told that I did not speak pure English. And so for the first year of two I slaved over my English. Even in the music halls, if one is giving what is called a 'classic number,' every word must be watched. They tell you that they want the language preserved for the masses, and so poems must be spoken in a certain way. The music of the language must be brought out. Though I am an American they came to me because I had the note to uplift the British public. But I have had to be careful in order to be true. A false note, a scrap of affectation, and they scream you down. One must be human above everything else. Then it's like a sum in mathematics—the answer can't come back wrong. Its eye-to-eye, heart-to-heart work. I am sorry that I am here for so short a time, for in this sort of work you must have time to reach the heart of your audience. My first experience in the rough Sheffield districts was rather discouraging, but when Mr. Oswald Stoll sent me back for a second tour of the provinces I found friends awaiting me everywhere. 'A little poetry is good for them,' declared Mr. Stoll, 'and what's more I am going to give them the big speeches from Shakespeare before I am through with them.' Poems may be in sharp contrast to acrobats and boomerang-throwers, but I feel sure the change must be appreciated anywhere in time. It is purely a question of the heart."

It was only natural to ask whether Mrs. Potter had found New York hard-hearted.

Money vs. Heart.

"America, of course, is a young country," she replied, "and the shepherds of the country—the powerful financiers and influential politicians—haven't had time, perhaps, to cultivate hearts. The country has grown very rich, and it seems to me that the wealth given the women has left them with a cold, stony expression. Perhaps I am wrong, but the women I see in the street cars, in the hotels and elsewhere, strike me as having a somewhat hard and defiant look. I miss the romance I had expected to find in their faces—I miss a certain tenderness coming to me from their eyes."

"They are not the same women you saw when you lived here?"

"Do you know how many years it has been since I lived in New York? Eighteen," she answered, with a retrospective smile. "A great many changes have taken place in that time. Perhaps I have changed. But I am not a New Yorker, you know. I am a child of the sun. Perhaps one is given more to dreams in the South. It is very nice, of course, to make a lot of money, and I want to make a lot if I can, but I want to be happy at the same time. I don't want to have my heart hurt. After all, I have only one life to live; I can eat only so many meals a day and I can sleep on only one bed. Happiness, therefore, is dearer to me than money. My real happiness is in my work. So far as the world of art is concerned, I am a factor in it to-day. In England they call my work 'the art of stillness.' In Africa and Australia I am known as an American, though in my own country I may be considered a stranger. In Scotland there is always a welcome for me. I have made real friends there. See, this was given me by the gallery boys of a music hall in Glasgow."

She leaned forward and showed me a jewel hanging from a slender chain about her neck.

Appealing to the Masses.

"It is a heart capped with a crown, you see. I feel that it is a good thing to appeal to the hearts of people. This appeal in itself is a great civilizer, for anything that touches the heart broadens the brain. Once understood, poetry does this. In England they have been whacking away at this sort of thing in the halls for several years. My first experience in the work was when the C. I. V.'s came back from the war in South Africa. Their return was celebrated at the Tivoli, and I recited 'The Charge of the Light Brigade.' The London halls serve a distinct educational purpose, as well as entertaining the public. Six years ago, when the tariff was a burning question, I was engaged to recite the 'Tariff Poem,' the managers paying me so much and the Tariff Committee so much. They wanted to take the pulse of the masses. I went from the Tivoli to the Paragon in the Whitechapel district, and by the end of the week the entertainments assumed the form of Chamberlain mass-meetings. The enthusiasm was tremendous, and the attitude of the masses was determined beyond doubt. I have also appeared many times at the Sunday League performances, given in answer to the cry of the people that they had no place to go on their one day of leisure."

Mrs. Potter's eyes almost outshone her hair as she talked of her poetic campaign in the 'alls.

Blood in Her Veins.

"I have bright red blood, not water, in my veins," she asserted, "and when people cheer a poem that means something to them it means quite as much to me. It is a mistake, I believe, to think that nothing serious should be given in a vaudeville theatre. In the London halls even tragedy is understood, for the reason that the lives of the poor are tragedies in themselves. I go on the principle that life is made up of tears and laughter, and that by giving a little of both I can touch the human side of an audience. But I should not think of reciting 'Ostler Joe,' for example, at this house. There is nothing in that any more. America is too intelligent for that sort of thing. Next week I shall give Oscar Wilde's 'The Fairy Prince,' and other poems that appeal to the imagination as well as the heart. I am sorry that I must go back at the end of eight weeks, for I realize that I must create my own public, and it is impossible to do this in so short a time divided among a number of theatres."

"Will you go back to the halls?" I asked.

"I may go on a tour that will take me to France, Russia and other countries," she said. "A London manager is planning to organize a company, and if the plan is carried out we shall give 'Lady Windermere's Fan,' 'Camille' and other plays. Before coming here I made a tour of the English provinces in 'Lady Frederick.' Mr. Maugham's play had a curious experience in London. Irishmen who saw it objected to Lady Frederick's accent. They said it wasn't 'class,' that it was Mrs. and not Lady Frederick with an accent. Irishmen have submitted new lines to Mr. Maugham, and some of them have been substituted for old ones in the London production. When Lady Frederick asks her brother, 'Gerald, how shall we pay our debts?' he now replies: 'On the Kathleen Mavourneen plan—it may be for years and it may be forever.' This is only one of the changes that have resulted from suggestions sent to the author by witty Irishmen. When I went into the provinces I took the hint and played Lady Frederick without an accent. I am not certain what I shall do when I get back to London. There, you know, we work from August to Christmas, then slow up and do a bit in the spring. I don't think I shall go back to the halls. But I don't regret an hour of the time I have given to them, for they are the greatest masters I have ever studied with. They have taught me to be careful, to be true."

And Mrs. Potter's sigh of satisfaction seemed to come straight from the heart.

THE WIDOW

Masculine Lies and Feminine Fibs—Lovely Works of the Imagination.

By Helen Rowland.

"I WISH," sighed the Widow, glancing thoughtfully after a young man to whom she had just bowed, as she strolled down Fifth avenue beside the Bachelor, "that men wouldn't lie the way they do."

"Do they?" inquired the Bachelor in shocked astonishment, following the Widow's glance. "That was Bobby Porter, wasn't it?" he added. "Has he been lying?"——

"DO they?" interrupted the Widow, scornfully, ignoring the last question. "It isn't the fact that they DO, but the WAY they do it that is so harrowing."

"How did he—how do they do it?" asked the Bachelor, with real concern.

"Well," explained the Widow, plaintively, "they always add so many unnecessary frills. They start out to tell a simple, little white fib and end by inventing a highly colored 'Arabian Nights' tale of adventure. They begin with a tiny prevarication and finish with a work of art that would make Baron Munchausen tremble for his reputation."

"How foolish!" exclaimed the Bachelor contemptuously. "Give me a plain black lie—I mean a plain, unvarnished statement of the untruth"——

"But that's never what you—or any man—gives a woman?" broke in the Widow, waving her muff excitedly.

"Because," declared the Bachelor, "no woman would accept it. Every woman prefers a work of the imagination to a simple fact. She will strain at a gnat-like fib and swallow a camel of falsehood. She likes wreaths around excuses and ruffles on a joke and pink ribbons and fancy decorations on everything, from a man's lovemaking to his desk. She hates a plain, unvarnished lie"——

"As much as a man hates the plain, unvarnished truth!" interrupted the Widow sarcastically.

That was Bobby Porter!

"What?" The Bachelor dropped his cane.

"He wants it sugar-coated and scented and half-veiled and delicately spiced to suit the palate of his vanity," explained the Widow, "and he can only swallow half of it at time without choking"——

"Because that's all he ever gets," broke in the Bachelor. "But a woman won't swallow a half-truth. She wants her lies in allopathic doses. It is easier to make her believe that the reason you couldn't keep your engagement with her was because your house blew up or your office burned down or your train was wrecked and you were busy tending the killed and wounded than because you couldn't find a clean shirt or had a cold that made you talk through your nose or an important business meeting at the last moment, which might be a fact"——

"And might be a fancy," put in the Widow airily. "Besides, these old-fashioned excuses lose their freshness after she has heard them a few hundred times. 'Business,' 'the club,' 'a sick friend,' and 'a cousin from out of town' have all been overworked until they are shopworn. But," she added sympathetically, "it must be an awful strain on the masculine imagination to have to invent so many daily fairy tales full of adventure"——

"And incident"—— sighed the bachelor.

"And local color"——

"And noble sentiment," finished the Bachelor. "It is. And the fact that he keeps it up is a sign of true love and devotion in any man!"

"I beg your pardon?" The Widow started.

The bachelor dropped his cane.

"Well," retorted the bachelor, "no man is going to take all that trouble for a woman he doesn't love and whose good opinion he doesn't prize. It's not until he loses interest in her that he stops inventing excuses and fairy tales and trying to whitewash himself. It's not until he ceases to care what she thinks that he begins to tell her the brutal truth"——

"And yet," sighed the Widow, "a woman will lie to anybody else on earth sooner than to the man she loves!"

"And a man," rejoined the Bachelor, "will lie to the woman he loves sooner than to anybody else on earth! But," he added desperately, "who's been lying to you?"

The Widow lifted her eyebrows and shrugged her shoulders inscrutably.

"Was it—Jack Van Tassel?" persisted the Bachelor determinedly.

"Of course not," returned the Widow, "Jack's a nice boy, Mr. Travers!"

"Or Bertie Hemingway?"

"Certainly not, but"——

"Then it WAS Bobby Porter!" declared the Bachelor with conviction.

"It was NOT!" retorted the Widow indignantly. "It was Bobby Porter who helped me find out—helped me catch the Hans Andersen who told me the fairy tale."

"Humph!" exclaimed the Bachelor with disgust. "A man who will tell"——

"He didn't tell, Mr. Travers," declared the Widow, turning on the Bachelor with a glint in her eye and a flush on her cheeks. "He only happened to be calling on me that evening."

"What evening?" inquired the Bachelor hastily.

"The evening you said he was ill and told me that you SAT UP WITH HIM all night long," replied the Widow sweetly.

Home Hints

For Busy Housewives.

Potato Soup.

PARE and cut into dice three potoes, cover with water, add a piece of butter and a little onion if liked, and boil until done. Then add a quart of sweet milk. While this heats make a dough by rubbing one tablespoonful of lard into a small cup of flour with a half teaspoonful of baking powder in it; add milk to make a stiff dough, roll thin, cut into strips or small squares, drop in when milk comes to a boil, cover and boil ten minutes, season with pepper, salt and a little finely chopped parsley or thyme.

Sweet Potato Muffins.

TWO-THIRDS of a cup of fresh mashed sweet potatoes, two eggs well beaten, three tablespoons of sugar, mix these well, then add one cup of milk, two cups of flour, one teaspoon of salt, three heaping teaspoons of baking powder, one tablespoon of melted butter. Beat well and bake in buttered tins about twenty minutes in moderate oven. Raisins and chopped nuts may be added if desired.

Hint for Papering.

IN papering any room it should be remembered that light is the first consideration and that the paper must be chosen accordingly.

Pure white is the best choice when a specially light room is wanted, as it absorbs only about 15 per cent. of the light thrown upon it. Dark green, on the other hand, is the greatest consumer of light, absorbing about 85 per cent.

Next to white as a light-producer are the soft pastel tints and light blues, which absorb from 20 to 25 per cent. of the light; then comes orange at 30 per cent.; apple and gray greens, almost 50 per cent., and the popular brown is almost as bad as dark green, as it takes up about 60 to 70 per cent. of the light it should throw out.

Betty Vincent's Advice on Courtship and Marriage

When Walking With a Man.

Dear Betty:

IS it proper for a young lady to take a young man's arm while out walking, or is it proper for the young man to take the young lady's arm? J.

A young lady takes a young man's arm when out walking in the evening. At other times it is customary for the man and girl to walk without taking the arm. If the street is slippery or the young man wishes to help a young lady over a puddle or obstacle, he usually takes her arm.

Only a Friend.

Dear Betty:

I HAVE been in love with a young lady for more than six months. I told her recently how dearly I loved her and asked her to marry me. She said she loved me very much as a friend, but she couldn't care for me in any other way. I am heartbroken over it. Can you advise me how I could gain her love? Could it be anything in my action that has displeased her? She has always treated me as if she loved me. M. E. S.

You must wait patiently and perhaps the young lady will in time regard your suit more favorably. You probably have spoken too soon and she has been forced to refuse you because as yet she feels only a friendly interest in you. Continue your attentions, play the part of kind friend, and later, when you believe her affection has passed the friendly stage, ask her again to marry you.

Parental Consent.

Dear Betty:

I HAVE been going with a young lady for a year and a half and I have gained her consent to marriage. Should I, even though we do not expect to get married in the near future, ask her parents' consent now?

FLUSHING.

It is customary for a young man to ask the parents of his fiancee for their consent to the marriage. Even though you do not intend to marry immediately, it is best to tell the girl's parents about the engagement and ask their consent to it.

She Borrows Her Beau.

Dear Betty:

I HAVE a girl friend who comes regularly to my home. She is counted quite good-looking. It seems to be her delight to take all my men friends away from me. She does not seem to have any steady fellows. Do you think I should continue friends with this girl? ANNIE.

Your girl friend is showing a very peculiar form of friendship for you, and she seems to be merely using you. I advise you to give her up. If she cared for your friendship she would not pay attention to your men friends, but would prefer you to them.

Talcum Powder Cases.

DAINTY, inexpensive gifts that make nice prizes or birthday offerings for the school friend are boxes of violet scented talcum covered with cretonne cases.

These cases are quite simply made, being nothing but two pieces of cretonne or heavy flowered ribbon, the exact size of the powder case. They may either be overcast together on the wrong side or the edges can be bound with a narrow gold galloon.

The cretonne case reaches to the upper edge of the powder can, where the holes are, and to it is attached a top that comes down an inch or more at the sides and is bound in gold galloon. These tops may be entirely separate from the bottom or they can be fastened to the case at the back.

The Barrier

A Delightful Romance of Gold Hunting in the Klondike.

The Love of a Kentucky Soldier for a Daughter of the Frozen Wilderness.

By Rex Beach,

Author of "The Spoilers."

(Copyright, 1908, by Harper & Bros.)

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

John Gale, post trader at Flambeau, on the Yukon, has an Indian wife, Alluna, and one beautiful daughter, Necia. The girl has just returned home from a mission school. Her father tells her that the discovery of gold is bringing thousands of fortune-seekers to the region, and that the Government, to avert disorder, has established a small army post at Flambeau. The handful of soldiers are commanded by young Lieut. Burrell. As Necia and her father are discussing the affairs of the latter's French partner, Poleon Doret, who is expected back soon from a trip to Dawson, Burrell saunters up and enters into conversation with the girl. Burrell, who is attracted by Necia, learns with horror that she is a half-breed Indian. Poleon Doret returns from Dawson. He secretly loves Necia (who regards him as a big brother) and brings her a black lace Paris dress. Burrell enters the room just after she has put on the new costume.

CHAPTER III.

(Continued.)

Without Benefit of Clergy.

"I WAS looking for your father," said Burrell, wondering if this glorious thing could be the half-breed girl of yesterday. There was nothing of the native about her now, for her lithe young figure was drawn up to its height, and her head, upon which the long, black braids were coiled, was tipped back in a haughty poise. She had flung her hands out to grasp the table edge behind her, forgetful of her shawl, which drooped traitorously and showed such rounded lines as her ordinary dress scarce hinted at. This was no Indian maid, the soldier vowed; no blood but the purest could pulse in such veins, no spirit save the highest could flash in such eyes as these. A jealous rancor irked him at the thought of this beauty intended for the Frenchman's eyes.

"Can't you show yourself to me as well as to Poleon?" he said.

"Certainly not!" she declared. "He bought this dress for me and I put it on to please him." Now she was herself again, for a note in the Lieutenant's voice gave her dominance over him. "After he sees it I will take it off, and"——

"Don't—don't take it off—ever," said Burrell. "I thought you were beautiful before, because of your quaintness and simplicity, but now"—his chest swelled—"why, this is a breath from home. You're like my sister and the girls back in Kentucky, only more wonderful."

"Am I?" she cried, eagerly. "Am I like other girls? Do I really look as if I'd always worn clothes like these?"

"Born to them," said he.

A smile broke over her grave face, assuming a hundred different shades of pleasure and making a child of her on the instant; all her reserve and hauteur vanished. Her warmth and unaffected frankness suffused him, as she stood out, turning to show the beauties of her gown, her brown hands fluttering tremulously as she talked.

"It's my first party dress, you know, and I'm as proud of it as Molly is of her rubber boots. It's too big in here and too small right there; that girl must have had a bad chest; but otherwise it fits me as if it had been made for me, doesn't it? And the shoes! Aren't they the dearest things? See." She held her skirts back, showing her two feet side by side, her dainty ankles slim and shapely in their silk.

"They won't shed water," he said.

"I know; and look at the heels. I couldn't walk a mile to save my life."

"And they will come off if they get wet."

"But they make me very tall."

"They don't wear as well as moccasins." Both laughed delightedly till he broke in, impulsively:

"Oh, girl, don't you know how beautiful you are?"

"Of course I do" she cried, imitating his change of voice; then added, naively, "That's why I hate to take it off."

"Where did you learn to wear things like that?" he questioned. "Where did you get that—well—that air?"

"It seems to me I've always known. There's nothing strange about it. The buttons and the hooks and the eyes are all where they belong. It's instinct, I suppose, from father's side"——

"Probably. I dare say I should understand the mechanism of a dress suit, even if I'd never seen one," said the man, amused, yet impressed by her argument.

"I've always had visions of women dressed in this kind of clothing, white women—never natives—not dressed like this exactly, but in dainty, soft things, not at all like the ones I wear. I seem to have a memory, although it's hardly that, either—it's more like a dream—as if I were somebody else. Father says it is from reading too much."

"A memory of what?"

"It's too vague and tantalizing to tell what it is, except that I should be called Merridy."

"Merridy? Why that?"

"I'll show you. See." She slipped her hand inside the shawl and drew from her breast a thin gold chain on which was strung a band ring. "It was grandmother's—that's where I got the fancy for the name of Merridy, I suppose."

"May I look?"

"Of course. But I daren't take it off. I haven't had it off my neck since I was a baby." She held it out for him to examine, and, although it brought his head close to hers, there was no trace of coquetry in the invitation. He read the inscription, "From Dan to Merridy," but had no realization of what it meant, for he glimpsed the milk-white flesh almost at his lips and felt her breath stirring his hair, while the delicate scent of her person seemed to loose every strong emotion in him. She was so dainty and yet so virile, so innocent and yet so wise, so cold and yet so pulsating.

"It is very pretty," he said, inanely.

At the look in his eyes as he raised his head her own widened, and she withdrew from him imperceptibly, dismissing him with a mere inflection.

"I wish you would send Poleon here. It's time he was present."

As Burrell walked out into the air he shut his jaws grimly and muttered: "Hold tight, young man. She's not your kind—she's not your kind."

Inside the store he found Doret and the trader in conversation with a man he had not met before, a ragged nondescript white overalls were blue and faded and patched, particularly on the front of the legs above the knees, where a shovel-handle wears hardest; whose coat was of yellow mackinaw, the sleeves worn thin below the elbows, where they had rubbed against his legs in his work. As the soldier entered the man turned on him a small, shrewd, weather-beaten face with one eye, while he went on talking to Gale.

"It ain't nothin' to git excited over, but it's wuth follerin'. If I wasn't so cussed unlucky I'd know there was a pay streak som'ere close by."

"Your luck is bound to change, Lee," said the trader, who helped him to roll up a pack of provisions.

"Mebbe so. Who's the dressmaker?" He jerked his busy head toward Burrell, who had stopped at the front door with Poleon to examine some yellow grains in a folded paper.

"He's the boss soldier."

"Purty, ain't he?"

"If you ain't good he'll get you," said Gale, a trifle cynically, at which Lee chuckled.

"I reckon there's several of us in camp that ain't been a whole lot too good," said he. "Has he tried to git anybody yet?"

"No, but he's liable to. What would happen if he did? Suppose, for instance, he went after you—or me?"

The one-eyed man snorted derisively. "It ain't wuth considerin'!"

"Why not?" insisted Gale, guardedly. "Maybe I've got a record—you don't know."

"If you have, don't tell me nothin' about it," hastily observed Lee. "I'm a God-fearin' citizen myself, leanin' ever towards peace and quietudes, but what's past is dead and gone, and I'd hate to see a lispin' child like that blue-and-yeller party try to reezureck it."

"He's got the American army to back him up—at least five of them."

"Five agin a hundred. He aims to overawe us, don't he?" snickered the unregenerate Lee, but his wrinkles changed and deepened as he leaned across the counter confidentially.

"You say the word, John, and I'll take some feller along to help me, and we'll transfer this military post. There's plenty that would like the job if you give the wink."

"Pshaw! I'm just supposing," said the trader. "As long as they play around and drill and toot tuit horn, and don't bother anybody, I allow they're not in the way."

"All right! It's up to you. However, if I happen to leap down on this pay streak before it sees me comin', I'm goin' to put my friends in first and foremost, and shut out these dressmakers complete. So long!" He thrust his arms beneath the legs of a new pair of blue overalls that formed his pack-straps, wriggled the burden comfortably into place between his shoulders, and slouched out past Doret, to whom he nodded, ignoring the "dressmaker."

Having given Necia's message to Poleon, the Lieutenant took up his business with the trader. It concerned the purchase of certain supplies that had been omitted from the military outfit, and when this was concluded he referred to the encounter of that morning.

"I don't want you to think I bungle everything in that manner," he said, "for I don't. I want to work with you and I want to be friends with you."

"I'm willing," said Gale.

"Nobody dislikes playing policeman more than I do, but it's a part of my duty and I'll have to do it," continued the young man.

"I reckon you simply aim to keep peace, eh? You ain't lookin' for nobody in particular?"

"Of course not—outside of certain notorious criminals who have escaped justice and worked north."

"Then there is a few that you want, eh?"

"Yes, certain old-timers. The officers at every post have descriptions of a few such, and if they show up we will take them in and hold them till courts are established."

"If you've got their names and descriptions mebbe I could help you," said the trader, carelessly.

"Thank you; I'll bring up the list and we'll go over it together. You must have been here a good while."

"About ten years."

"Then Miss Necia was born out in the States?"

Gale shot a startled glance at the soldier before he answered in the affirmative, but Burrell was studying a pattern of sunlight on the floor and did not observe him. A moment later he inquired, hesitatingly:

"Is this your first marriage, Mr. Gale?" When the other did not answer he looked up and quickly added:

"I beg your pardon, sir. What led me to ask was Miss Necia—she is so—well—she is such a remarkable girl."

Gale's face had undergone a change, but he answered, quietly:

"I ain't never been married."

"What?"

"When I took Alluna it wasn't the style, and neither one of us has thought much about it since."

"Oh, I see," exclaimed Burrell hurriedly. "I'll bring that list with me the first time I think about it," and, nodding amiably, he sauntered out. But his mind was in a whirl, and even after he had reached his quarters he found himself repeating:

"The other was bad enough. Poor little girl! Poor little girl!"

Gale likewise left the store and went into his house, the odd look still in his eyes, to find Necia posing in her new regalia for Poleon's benefit. At sight of her he fell into a strange and unexpected humor, and to their amazement commanded her roughly to take the things off. His voice and manner were harsh and at utter variance with any mood he had ever displayed before; nor would he explain his unreasoning fury, but strode out again, leaving her in tears and the Frenchman staring.

(To be Continued.)